



August 12, 2005

Ms. Marlene H. Dortsch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.,
Washington
DC 20554
USA

***Concerning:
IB Docket: 05-221***

Dear Ms. Dortsch,

The Satellite Action Plan Regulatory Group ('SAP REG') and the European Satellite Operators Association ('ESOA') cordially submit the comments below in respect of the above proceeding.

By way of background, the satellite industry formed the Satellite Action Plan Regulatory Group¹ (SAP REG) in 1997 under a mandate from the European Commission to address from an industry perspective the regulatory provisions affecting all satellite communication services in inter-alia the European Union.

ESOA² is a non-profit organisation based in Brussels, Belgium which represents the views of European satellite operators. It was established in early 2002 to reflect the views of satellite operators on critical policy, regulatory and trade matters, both in Europe and internationally and to ensure that communications satellite services remain a key component of European space policy.

¹ SAP REG members include Alcatel Space, Connexion by Boeing, EADS, Eutelsat, France Telecom, Hispasat, Hughes Network Systems, ICO Global Communications, Inmarsat Ventures PLC, New Skies Satellites, SES Global, Telespazio, Thuraya and WorldSpace.

² ESOA's members include EADS Space Services, EurasiaSat SAM, Europe*Star, Hellasat, Hispasat, Inmarsat Ventures PLC, New Skies Satellites, Nordic Satellite AB, SES Global, Telenor and Telespazio. For more information on ESOA, please visit the association's website at www.esoa.net

Many SAP REG and ESOA members, some of which are either US companies or companies operating on US territory, have a direct interest in the Mobile Satellite Service (MSS) sector both from a European perspective as well as international developments in all ITU Regions. Regulatory decisions taken by major ITU Member States (such as the US), which impact the availability of frequency allocations on a national or regional basis for the MSS, therefore have significant impact on the future development of the MSS sector on a global basis. The continuation of the leadership role which the US Administration has consistently taken in supporting the availability of up to 2 X 35 MHz (at 1990-2025 MHz and 2165-2200 MHz) of 2 GHz MSS spectrum in ITU Region 2 at ITU WRC-95, ITU WRC-97 and ITU WRC-2000 is therefore of the utmost importance and would be consistent with the vast majority of Administrations in the world which have taken action consistent with the spirit and intent of ITU/ WRC decisions to make available 2 X 30 MHz of spectrum for the MSS in the 2 GHz MSS bands.

SAP REG and ESOA fully endorse and support the comments made by the Satellite Industry Association (SIA) on July 29, 2005 in the above referenced docket. We would further wish to emphasize that the 2 X 20 MHz of currently allocated spectrum in the 2000-2020 MHz and 2180-2200 MHz frequency bands is the strict minimum for an economically viable MSS industry in the US, particularly in view of successfully taking advantage of the opportunity created by the FCC's recent adoption of the ATC framework. We also note that the allocation of 2 x 20 MHz in itself already represents a substantial reduction with respect to the 2 X 30 MHz of spectrum for the MSS allocated by most of Administrations..

As other respondents in this proceeding have made clear, the MSS industry requires access to at least the full 2 X 20 MHz of spectrum in the 2 GHz range in the United States to develop a range of innovative services, including, but not limited to those with ATC, to the public and to other government sector users. Any decision to reduce the 2 GHz MSS allocations further could deal a devastating blow to the future development of the MSS industry, both in the US and abroad.

SAP REG and ESOA note that the development of 2 GHz MSS systems on a regional and global basis will benefit from the economies of scale and the interoperability benefit which would arise from the availability of consistent and common frequency allocations to the MSS in the 2 GHz MSS on a global basis. Indeed 2 GHz MSS systems with global coverage would also afford US consumers, US industry and US Government customers considerable benefits as they travel, do business and operate internationally.

In Europe, the CEPT has recently recognised the importance of the 2 GHz bands for the MSS industry and has supported the retention of the 1980-2010 MHz and

2170-2200 MHz band for MSS use. SAP REG and ESOA therefore respectfully urge the FCC to retain the frequency bands 2000-2020 MHz (Earth-to-space) and 2180-2200 MHz (space-to-Earth) for MSS use on a primary basis consistent with the current US regulatory framework and cognizant of the present ITU international framework for the 2 GHz MSS bands.

Sincerely,

Kumar Singarajah
Chairman
SAP REG

Aarti Holla-Maini
Secretary General
ESOA

p.p.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'K. Singarajah', with a stylized, cursive script.A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Aarti Holla-Maini', with a stylized, cursive script.

Copy:
David Cavossa
SIA Executive Director